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E U L O G Y

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

THEODRIC ROMEYN BECK, M. D., LL. D.,

BY

FRANK HASTINGS HAMILTON, M. D.

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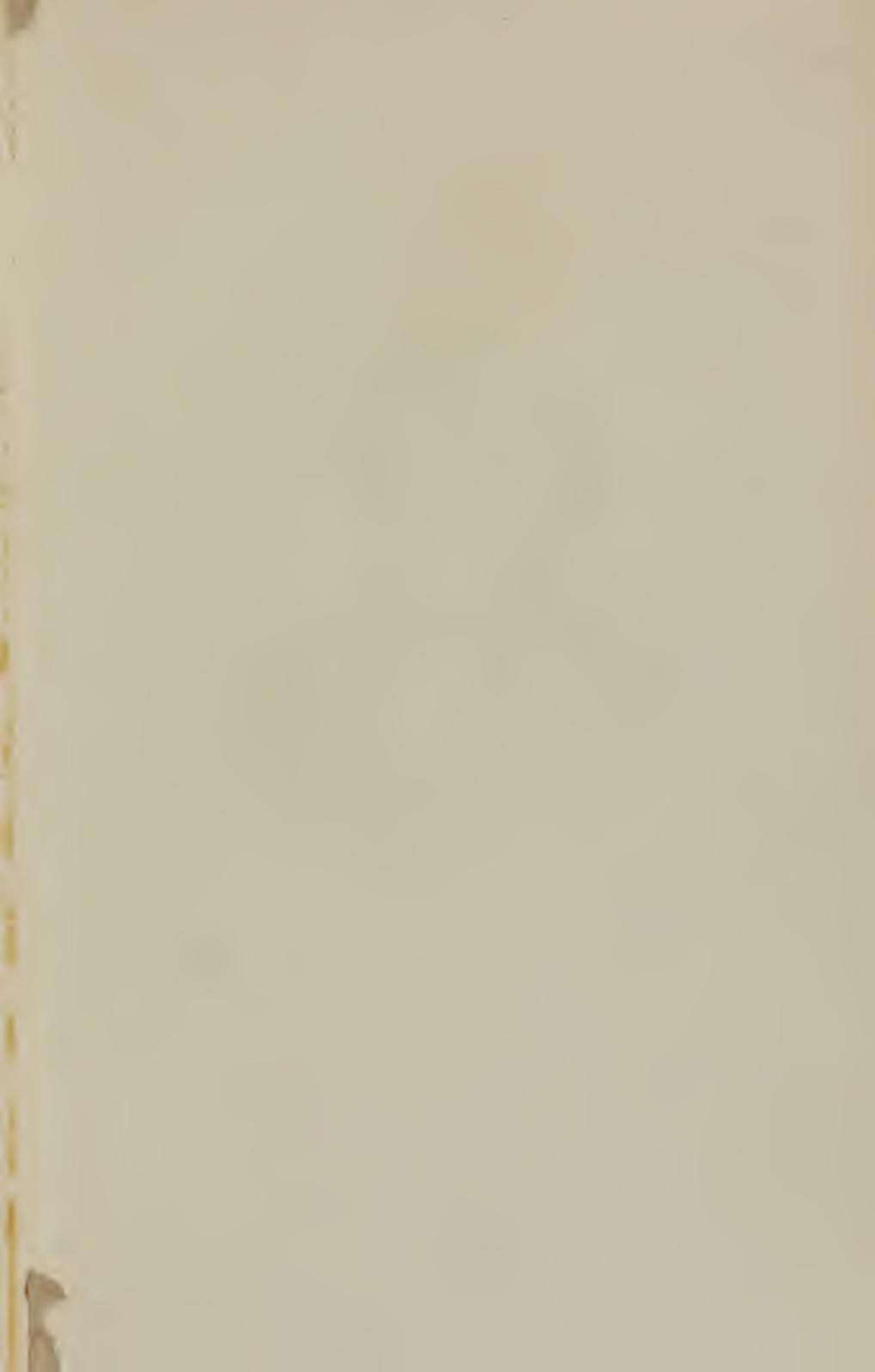


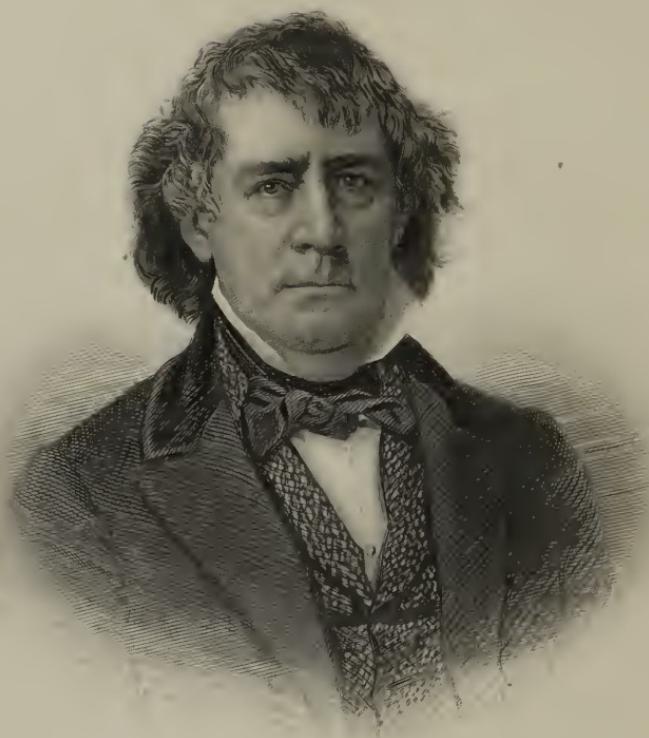
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J. Romeyn Beck

EULOGY  
ON THE  
LIFE AND CHARACTER  
OF  
THEODRIC ROMEYN BECK, M. D., LL. D.,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE  
MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,

BY FRANK HASTINGS HAMILTON, M. D.  
*III*

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## E U L O G Y .

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It is a swift current—that stream of life on which we ride. We fall asleep—and awaking, find ourselves almost home. Our companions, too, are constantly changing; at every moment new ones come aboard, and old ones leave us; and we have scarcely time to become familiar with their faces, or to make ourselves acquainted with their characters and purposes, before they are summoned to the gangway—the boat is lowered, and we wave them a friendly farewell. All along the sands of that silent shore, which we now so faintly see, our friends have left us; and we are awaiting the time when, cheerfully, manfully and hopefully, I trust, we shall receive our summons, and “depart alike to the inevitable grave.”

I am not, gentlemen, one of your oldest members—yet, of those who occupied these seats when, for the first time I listened to your deliberations, not a few are now dead; but of the pioneers—the founders and early members, not one remains. Most of them died many years since, and their vacant places have been so long filled by others, that we have ceased to notice their absence.

But to-day, a chair is vacant which no one has yet come to fill—where, for nearly forty years, has sat a beloved associate, and to which you have, for as many years, been accustomed to look for counsel. During all this period its claimant has been rarely absent, unless detained by sickness or by urgent and imperative duties. But, in the absence of its venerated occupant, during our deliberations which have just closed, and on this anniversary occasion, you have, I am instructed to tell you, the sad and significant announcement that Theodric Romeyn Beck is dead, and that he, also, will counsel with us no more.

Let us pause, while we review his labors, and contemplate our loss—for, in such a life as has here terminated, there must be something instructive, and we ought carefully to estimate its value. Upon the speaker, who was once his pupil, subsequently his colleague, and now, by your partial suffrages, his successor, has seemed to devolve the duty to trace his history—to epilogue the long chapter of his life, and to draw the moral; in order that these things may hereafter find a faithful record upon the annals of our society. With an earnest desire that I may do no injustice to a theme so sacred, both to the living and to the dead, yet with doubting and unequal steps, I undertake the task.

Theodric Romeyn Beck was born at Schenectady, in the State of New-York, on the 11th day of August, 1791. The family were of English origin, but so

long settled at Schenectady that their descendants, by association and intermarriage, became identified with the Dutch population.

The first of the family, of whom we have any knowledge, was Caleb Beck, who sailed as master of a vessel from Boston to England, and who having married at Schenectady, was subsequently lost at sea. His son, the great grandfather of the subject of our memoir, as we learn from the probate of his will before the commissioners at Albany, in the year 1733, was "Caleb Beck, gentleman, a freeholder in this colony; having during his life, and at the time of his death, goods, rights and credits in divers places in our province."

His grandfather was admitted an attorney at law, to practice in all the courts, at Albany, in the year 1751.

The father of Dr. Beck, who also studied law, but never practised, married Catherine Theresa Romeyn, only daughter of the Rev. Derick Romeyn, D. D., then pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church, at Schenectady, and well known as a distinguished professor of Theology in that church.

The ancestral name Caleb, was preserved through five successive generations, having only ceased with the brother of Dr. Beck.

The Romeyn family came from Holland, and settled in New-York about the middle of the seventeenth century. Among those who acquired distinction, and

whose names have come down to us, in addition to the Rev. Derick Romeyn, of whom we have spoken, we may recognize the brother of Mrs. Beck, the Rev. John B. Romeyn, D. D., who died in New-York, in 1825; and a cousin, Nicholas Romaine, M. D., who was president of this Society in 1809, 10, and 11, and who was made an Honorary Member in 1812.

Dr. Beck's father having died in 1798, at the age of 27 years, left his five sons to the sole care of his young widow, to whose indomitable energy, sound education, piety and good judgment they are probably mainly indebted for the distinction which they all subsequently attained.

Abraham, a lawyer of much promise, died at St. Louis, Missouri, in 1821.

John Brodhead Beck, M. D., who was elected in 1829 a member of this Society, late Professor of *Materia Medica* and Botany, at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New-York, and author of many medical works, besides the chapter contributed by him to "Beck's Medical Jurisprudence," died in New-York, in 1851.

Nicholas Fairly Beck died while holding the office of Adjutant General of the State, under De Witt Clinton, in 1830. And

Lewis C. Beck, M. D., late Professor of Chemistry in the Albany Medical College, and in the Rutgers College, New-Jersey, author of several scientific works, and who, as a member of the scientific corps

which made the New-York Geological Survey, contributed the volume on Mineralogy, one of the most valuable portions of that excellent State Report, died in 1853.

The rudiments of Dr. Beck's education were acquired at the grammar school of his native city, under the more immediate supervision of his maternal grandfather, the Rev. Derick Romeyn, D. D.

He entered Union College, at Schenectady, in 1803, and graduated in 1807, when only sixteen years old. Union College had then been established but a few years, and, in a great measure, through the exertions of Dr. Romeyn.

Immediately on leaving college he came to this city, and was admitted to the office of Drs. Low and McClelland, the latter of which gentlemen was the first president of this Society.

His medical education was completed, however, in the city of New-York, under the personal instructions of the celebrated Dr. David Hosack. At the same time, also, he attended the lectures at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Eastern District, then recently established in that city; and in 1811 he received the degree of Doctor in Medicine; on which occasion he presented, as the subject of his inaugural thesis, a paper on "Insanity"—the first fruits of the study of that subject which afterwards engaged so large a share of his attention, and upon which he expended such stores of learning, and exhibited such

powers of research. The thesis was published in a pamphlet form, containing thirty-four pages, and received from various quarters highly flattering notices.

In this early composition of the young student, we may see plainly enough the presage of his future eminence. Claiming, with characteristic modesty, no credit for originality, and acknowledging that he had no practical experience to relate, he gathered from a great number of sources facts and opinions, and so condensed and arranged them as to present a complete epitome of what was then known upon this, with us, hitherto neglected subject. With great care he arranged also, in a multitude of foot notes, all his references, which, in themselves, testify to his already remarkable classical attainments, and to his laborious habits.

After a brief notice of the history and literature of insanity, there follows a synopsis of its symptomatology, its etiology, pathology, and prognosis. In conclusion, he has devoted a chapter to medical jurisprudence and police, and a section to the treatment of the insane, wherein he protests against the confinement of criminal lunatics in jail, as incompatible with proper attendance and with the safety of the other prisoners. He advocates also the establishment of public asylums, which shall be subject to the supervision and control of competent commissioners.

On his return from New-York, he commenced at once the practice of medicine and surgery in this city, and the same year he was appointed physician to the alms-house. On resigning this office, he presented a memorial to the supervisors on the subject of work-houses, the practical wisdom of which daily experience proves at this time.

Dr. Beck was married in 1814, at Caldwell, Warren county, to Harriet, daughter of James Caldwell, a merchant of this city, but whose principal estate and residence was at Caldwell, on Lake George. He was a gentleman of Irish birth, and well known for his wit and hospitality. His humor has been especially celebrated in several of the entertaining tales written by J. K. Paulding.

In the year 1815, at the age of twenty-four, Dr. Beck received the appointment of professor of the Institutes of Medicine, and of lecturer on Medical Jurisprudence in the College of Physicians and Surgeons for the Western District, established under the auspices of the Regents, at Fairfield, in Herkimer county, New-York; an institution then in the third year of its existence. Notwithstanding this appointment, which required his absence from home only a small portion of the year, he continued in the practice of his profession at Albany.

At the opening of the term in 1824, he delivered an introductory lecture on the *Advantages of Country Medical Schools*, which was published by request of

the class. The subject had been suggested by a remark made in an introductory lecture by one of the professors in New-York, disparaging to country schools, and which had found its way into some of the New-York prints, to which this discourse was a severe, but dignified and dispassionate reply.

In testimony of their utility, he referred, among other things, to the not inconsiderable number of their graduates who had already risen to merited distinction; and in answer to the illiberal declaration of the New-York professor, that the Legislature ought to withdraw its aid from all other schools and concentrate its efforts upon the "school of the metropolis," Dr. Beck justly said:

"The State of New-York, we may safely predict, will never adopt the counsel that has been given her. Her statesmen, her legislators, her learned men and her citizens generally, have not thus estimated the wants of the community. Her course uniformly has been to cherish learning in every situation, and to foster its first fruits with the care of a parent. At this crisis, flourishing in arts, unrivalled in commerce and exalted in wealth, she surely will not stint her supplies, or pour them with a partial hand into one portion of her dominion, while she leaves the other to need. She will not destroy what is flourishing, or overturn what is becoming permanent. She will, as she has ever done, regard the interests of education with an impartial eye.

"In thus doing she can alone perform her proper duties, and fulfil the promises of her high destiny."

Already, in 1817, Dr. Beck had withdrawn entirely from the practice of medicine, having in this year accepted the place of Principal to the Albany academy.

His success as a practitioner had been quite equal to his expectations, and with less devotion to science, or with less care for his patients, he might have continued in practice. But it was soon manifest, both to himself and to his friends, that he could not long continue an equal attention to both. He was unwilling to assume the responsibilities of a physician without devoting to each case that exact amount of careful investigation which his high standard of fitness demanded. Every new feature in disease provoked, in a mind trained to accuracy and observation, new solicitudes, new doubts, and claimed new and more thorough examination. Added to this, the scenes of suffering which he was compelled to witness wore gradually upon a frame naturally sensitive, and his health began visibly to decline.

At first, one must naturally regret that a mind so well stored, and so eminently qualified, in many respects, to minister successfully to the sick, should have been diverted thus prematurely from its original purpose. It would be difficult to measure the amount of good which, as a practitioner of medicine, he might have accomplished; how much individual suffering

such talents might have alleviated, and how many valuable lives such attainments might have saved. This is a loss which the citizens of his adopted town, and of the country adjacent, have chiefly sustained, and which they must estimate. It is a question to them whether he has made himself as useful as a teacher as he might have been as a physician; but I believe they will be slow to find fault with his choice, when they have carefully figured up the account, and have balanced the reckoning. In fact, I think, that in the fame alone which his illustrious name has given to their city, they must find an adequate apology and compensation for all his apparent neglect of their physical sufferings.

But this would be indeed only a narrow view of the question upon which the young, and, I have no doubt, conscientious Beck, assumed thus early the right to decide for himself. Although Dr. Beck formally, at this time, relinquished the practice of medicine, and never again resumed it, yet his interest in the science did not cease, but to the improvement and perfection of some one or another of its departments the balance of his life was, in a great measure, devoted, and especially to such portions as were of general or of universal interest. He seemed to have called in his attention from a narrow range of objects, only that he might fasten it again upon a much wider range. He withdrew himself from the alms-houses and the jails, in which the unfortunate

maniacs were treated rather as criminals than as proper objects of sympathy and of medical care, that he might, in the retirement of his study, within which he had accumulated nearly all the experience of the world, devise the more unerringly the means of unfettering their intellects and their limbs, then so cruelly chained.

In a letter to his uncle, Dr. Romeyn, then in Europe, dated June 30, 1814, he says: "I have begun to look upon medicine in a very different manner from what I formerly did. Although delighted with the study yet I dislike the practice, and I had not acquired sufficiently comprehensive views of its value and great importance as an object of research. I now find it a subject worthy of my mind, and for some time past I have brought all my energies to its examination."

From this remarkable passage, in which we have definitely the plan of his future life, we learn also what enlarged and intelligent views he entertained of the value of true medical science.

In 1829 Dr. Beck was elected President of this Society, and was re-elected the two succeeding years—in itself a sufficient testimony of the esteem in which he was held by his fellow-members.

His first annual address was devoted mainly to the subject of "Medical Evidence," which he regarded as embracing not only the interests of the profession, but of the community generally. In this address he

urges the propriety of appointing in certain counties, districts, or parts of the State, medical men, who shall be especially charged with the duty of making the examinations upon the cadaver, in order that by experience and study they may become better fitted for the performance of this important duty. In all cases he believed the medical witness ought to be permitted to present a "written report" of his examination, and not be required to give it verbally and without sufficient preparation. Nor could Dr. Beck see any good reason why, if such services are important to the community in promoting the proper administration of justice, the medical men who render them are not entitled to receive an adequate compensation. "There is not," says Dr. Beck, "an individual attending on any of our courts, who is not paid for his time and services, with the exception of such as are engaged in these investigations."

In his second annual address he calls the attention of the society to the rapid progress of the science of medicine, especially in its growing distrust of mere medical theories, and in its devotion to pathology, anatomy, chemistry, *materia medica*, and the collateral sciences. In defence of those who pursue the study of anatomy, he utters the following just sentiment: "All will grant their pursuit would not have been selected except from a high sense of duty. It requires some lofty incitement—some moral courage, to be thus employed. The mysterious change which

death induces, is alone sufficient to startle the most buoyant spirit; but with this, the pathologist must familiarize himself. He proceeds to his high office at the risk of health—often, indeed, of existence."

In conclusion, he bestows a well merited rebuke upon those who pretend to employ vegetable remedies to the exclusion of mineral, on the assumed ground that while minerals are poisonous, vegetables are innocuous, demonstrating, by a reference to their well known properties, that among vegetables may be found the most active poisons in nature; and he appeals to his countrymen that they will not open wide the door to empiricism, and thus contribute to the destruction of a profession so important as that of medicine.

As a theme for his last annual discourse, Dr. Beck selected the subject of **SMALL POX**, as one of "permanent and abiding interest, not only to us as medical men, but to the whole community, indeed to the whole human race."

This paper consists mainly of a rapid history of the origin and progress of this terrible scourge, and of the value and necessity of thorough vaccination, with a view to its ultimate extinction.

"I do not pretend," says Dr. Beck, "to recommend laws exactly similar to those that have been enumerated, for our free governments, but I will say that they furnish subjects for serious consideration. Whether some regulations could not be devised to arouse

the apathy of that portion of the community who are always the largest sufferers—whether the appointment by authority of medical men, particularly charged with the duty of vaccination, and preserving and transmitting the vaccine matter, and obliged to keep registers of those they attend—whether the promulgation of instructions, stating the dangers that threaten, the misery and mortality that may be avoided, the circumstances that prevent the complete influence of the cow pox, and the precautions necessary for its constitutional effects—whether, in fine, a census should not be taken of those who have not labored under one or other of these diseases, and they be compelled, under proper penalties, to submit to the latter—are suggestions which, to my mind, deserve some weight with those who have the power to render them imperative.

“Life can be hazarded under our own roof as much as in the field of battle, and the experience of all nations shows that in this case the chances have been fearful. When the means of prevention are within the power of a determined and united community, what can prevent their adoption with as much efficacy as ever resulted from the mandates of an absolute monarch?

“As a profession, we have not been wanting in sounding the alarm and providing against the danger. And it is a proud reflection, that the dangers of the small pox, its wide-spread ravages, and its constant

succession, have been broken in upon by one who lived and died a physician. But he must be insensible to the loftier bearings of the subject, who can leave its consideration without referring to the government of that Being in whose hands are the ‘issues of all things.’

“Its history teaches us gratitude to that Providence which does not willingly afflict the children of men; which suffers physical as well as moral evil only for a season, and which, while it has permitted former generations to be scourged by ravaging infection, has, in mercy to us, removed the dreaded pestilence, or confined the operation of its destructive march.”

I have been thus diffuse in my quotations from these several addresses of Dr. Beck, that you may see to how late a period he continued to feel an interest in, and to cultivate laboriously the science of medicine. Selecting always those themes for his discourses which were of the largest interest to the largest number, he was able to discuss them in a manner which indicated an intimate acquaintance with all their relations and bearings. His suggestions are constantly such as might become a physician, a philanthropist and a statesman; and that they were not Utopian is proven by the fact that very many of them, either in their original forms, or only slightly modified, have been adopted as measures of state policy and general hygiene, or, if not adopted, they still continue to commend themselves to the intelli-

gence of enlightened men everywhere, and physicians still continue to reiterate his sentiments, and to urge their adoption upon those who have the care of the public interests.

Nor can I omit to indicate as worthy of especial notice, the humble, christian-like deference with which he recognizes the hand of a kind Providence in all those discoveries and improvements in medicine, resulting in the amelioration of the condition of our race, of which our profession has been so long the chosen and honored medium.

In 1826 Dr. Beck was made Professor of Medical Jurisprudence, at Fairfield Medical College, instead of lecturer, and in 1836 he was transferred from the chair of practice to that of Materia Medica, in accordance with his own request; and these two chairs he continued to occupy until the abandonment of the College in 1840.

Medical colleges had been established both at Albany and Geneva under new and favorable auspices, each having received liberal endowments from the State, and although the College at Fairfield still retained the confidence of the profession to such a degree that in its last catalogue its pupils numbered 114, and its graduates 33; yet as it was apparent that the wants of the community did not require three colleges situated so near each other, and as both Albany and Geneva had the advantage in their relative size and accessibility, it was determined by the

several professors to discontinue the lectures at Fairfield.

At this time the faculty consisted of Westel Willoughby, John De Lamater, James Hadley, James McNaughton, T. Romeyn Beck and myself, as their newly appointed Professor in the chair of Surgery, recently made vacant by the resignation of Reuben D. Mussey.

Very few changes had ever occurred in the school since its first organization. Lyman Spaulding, the first professor of anatomy and surgery had died; Joseph White and Delos White, respectively professors of surgery and of anatomy, had resigned, and also Dr. Mussey, my immediate predecessor. With these exceptions the faculty remained as in 1815.

So intimately associated is the history of this college with the subject of this memoir, that I shall be pardoned for occupying your time with a lively description of the college and country adjacent, written by an old pupil,\* and published in the Nov. No. for 1851 of the New-York Lancet.

“The pioneers in medicine in central New-York are almost forgotten; and to refresh the memories of the brethren we propose a short sketch of the Professors of the ‘Old Pioneer’ school in Herkimer county, N. Y.      \*      \*      \*      \*

“Does any one remember crossing the country in a rude wagon from Little Falls to the village of Fair-

\* B. W. Richmond, of Ashtabula, Ohio.

field, eight miles into the country? It is a grazing district—the farm-houses are plain, the farmers plainer, and their daughters expert at cheese and butter making, and even often successful in securing a graduate for a husband. The village lies in a high region of country, and is mean in appearance, and wholly without local interest, save what was imparted by the medical college and an academy.

"The school was started under the management of such old veterans as Willoughby, White, Hadley, and De Lamater, somewhere about the year 1812.

"At an early day, in the very heart of the wilderness, Dr. Willoughby and a partner in medicine had entered on the race for fame, as practitioners of medicine and surgery, in that part of the country which lies between Fairfield and Newport. They lived in a log cabin—were both bachelors—cooked and washed for themselves, and made their sallies on horseback into the surrounding forest, broken only here and there by a dwelling. One of the partners is lost to memory, so far as we know, but Dr. Willoughby became the first professor of obstetrics in the Fairfield Medical College, and remained connected with it until its close. Dr. Willoughby acquired wealth, and Willoughby Medical College in Ohio, received from him a liberal endowment and its name.

"This bye place had been selected for the school because students could live cheaply, and the rural character of its population rendered it probable that

they would be subject to fewer temptations to vice and idleness. A small stone edifice was erected into which three hundred students and sometimes more were crowded."

From these rude walls, built upon these cold and inhospitable hills, have gone out more than three thousand pupils, and nearly six hundred graduates; of whom nineteen have held, or do now hold, professorships in colleges, eight are in the United States service as surgeons, and very many more have risen to distinction in the practice of medicine and surgery.

Immediately on resigning his place at Fairfield, Dr. Beck was elected to the chair of *Materia Medica*, in the Albany Medical College. The chair of *Medical Jurisprudence*, to which he would most naturally have been chosen, being already occupied by a very able teacher, Amos Dean, Esq.

This professorship Dr. Beck continued to hold until 1854, when his declining health, together with an accumulation of other pressing duties, induced him to resign his place as an active officer, having now taught medicine in some of its departments for thirty-nine years, and the trustees then conferred upon him the honorary distinction of *Emeritus Professor*.

It has been mentioned that in 1817, Dr. Beck was made principal of the Albany Academy; and in a letter to his uncle, Dr. Romeyn, dated August 1, 1817, shortly before the appointment, he writes as

follows: "This I know, that by zeal and attention on the part of the instructors, it can be made an eminent and useful institution. \* \* I pray you to believe that the mention of my name as a candidate, was unsolicited and very unexpected. It is a spontaneous offer, and as such I shall always look on it as a testimony of no mean value." The citizens of Albany and his numerous pupils, now scattered throughout the United States, can bear witness, how great has been his zeal in behalf of that institution, and how well he has fulfilled his promise.

The building occupied as the academy, was erected for this purpose by the city authorities; it is large, commodious and distinguished, even among the numerous public edifices which adorn this capital, for its fine architectural proportions. Each department is supplied with able teachers, and with ample means for illustration, and during the more than thirty years of his administration, it has sustained a reputation second to no similar institution in the State.

I find in one of the Albany city papers, dated some years back, pencil sketches of a few of its most prominent citizens, among whom is mentioned Dr. Beck. The writer, who is not ignorant of his many other public services, and of his reputation abroad, thus speaks of his connection with the academy:

"The Albany academy is an institution which has furnished the community with more mind, than any other academy in this country. A distinction that is

doubtless due to the admirable discipline, and well stored brain which Dr. Beck brought with him into the institution, in 1817."

In 1848, Dr. Beck resigned his place as principal of the academy, and on the death of James Stevenson, Esq., he succeeded him as president of the board of trustees.

The "Society for the promotion of Agriculture, Arts, and Manufactures," was incorporated by the Legislature on the 12th of March, 1793, with Chancellor Livingston as its president. The existence of the corporation was limited by its charter to the first day of May, 1804. On the 2d day of April, 1804, the Legislature virtually renewed the charter, making it perpetual, changing the name of the corporation to that of "The Society for the Promotion of Useful Arts," and Chancellor Livingston was appointed the president of the new corporation. Dr. Beck was admitted a member of this society on the 5th day of February, 1812. Among its officers, in addition to its distinguished president, already named, were Simeon De Witt, John Tayler, David Hosack, Stephen Van Rensselaer, De Witt Clinton, Edmund C. Genet, and others prominent in the history of our State. Although Dr. Beck was at this time only in his twenty-first year, yet at the second meeting after his election, he was made chairman of a standing committee of five, appointed "for the purpose of collecting and arranging such minerals as our State

affords." And on the 1st of April, 1812, less than two months after his admission, he was appointed to deliver the annual address at the following session of the society. This duty he performed on the 3d day of February, 1813, in the old Senate Chamber, the principal part of which, by means of changes made in the building, has been incorporated into the room in which we are now assembled. The object of this address, as he remarks in his preface, was to "exhibit at one view the mineral riches of the United States, with their various application to the arts, and to demonstrate the practicability of the increase of different manufactures, whose materials are derived from this source."

This was eminently the field for Dr. Beck's peculiar talent; it was new, and everything had to be learned from the beginning; a host of persons and authorities had to be consulted, and the whole to be carefully digested, analyzed, and applied. The result could not have disappointed those who were familiar with his habits; but to one who had known him less, or who was at all acquainted with the difficulties which he was compelled to encounter in the little that was then known of the mineral resources of this country, the result seems astonishing; and to that elaborate and timely paper, we think, the American manufacturer is, to-day, in no small degree indebted for his wealth and prosperity. It was the lens which first brought the scattered rays of light upon this

subject to a focus, and which now melts the ores in a thousand furnaces. If, as Dr. Beck asserts, American mineralogy was then in its infancy, he was the first to urge upon it a confidence in itself, and to demonstrate to others its unsuspected capacities, and it is through such early guidance and assistance that it has so rapidly grown to complete manhood, no less than to the “persevering industry, the unconquerable enterprise, and the extraordinary ingenuity of our citizens.”

In 1819, Dr. Beck read, before the same society, a “Memoir on Alum,” the object of which was to present a view of one of the most important of the chemical arts. In preparing it, “I consulted,” says Dr. Beck, “every work relating to the subject within my reach.”

“Had the work conducted some years ago by Prof. Cooper, of Philadelphia, under the title of the *Emporium of Arts*, been continued, this attempt would doubtless have been useless, as the subject under consideration was one of those which he proposed to notice. I venture, though with unequal steps, to examine the history, progress and present state of the manufacture of *alum*, with a hope that my investigations may prove useful to some who are unable to consult systematical works, and above all, that they may direct the attention of our citizens to the means which they possess, within their own reach,

of converting useless mineral products into rich sources of individual and national profit."

This, together with the paper first mentioned, is published in the Transactions of the Society, before which they were delivered.

The Albany Lyceum of Natural History, was incorporated by the Legislature on the 23d day of April, 1823.

Stephen Van Rensselaer was, by the charter, appointed its first president, and Dr. Beck, its first vice-president. A union between this association and the society for the promotion of useful arts, was agreed upon and carried into effect in 1824, and consummated in form by an act of the Legislature of the 27th of February, 1829, incorporating the Albany Institute, which was to consist of three departments: the first, that of the physical sciences and the arts, to consist of the society for the promotion of useful arts as then constituted; the second, that of natural history, to consist of the Albany Lyceum of Natural History, as then constituted; the third, for the promotion of history and general literature, to be formed for the purpose. Of the Albany Institute so constituted, dating back its foundation to the establishment of the society for the promotion of agriculture, arts and manufactures in 1793, and thus being, I believe, the oldest institution of this character in our State, and one of the oldest in our country, Dr. Beck was

not only one of the most active members, but it may be safely said, without doing injustice to many others who have been connected with it, that he did more to keep up its organization, to enlarge its library and collections, and generally to advance its interests, than any other person. Its proceedings, as well as its published transactions, bear evidence to the fidelity and zeal with which he labored for its prosperity. At the time of his death, and for many years before, he was its president. In 1835, Dr. Beck, by appointment, delivered before the institute a eulogium on the life and services of Simeon DeWitt, Surveyor-General of the State, Chancellor of the University, and also, at the time of his death, one of the vice-presidents of the society. After a sketch of the life of the highly esteemed and venerable Surveyor-General, remarkable for the simplicity and clearness of the style and narrative, adverting to the loss which the institute had sustained in the death of other members, he closes in language which has a peculiar appropriateness on this occasion.

“Happy, (says he), if, when our account is made up, we shall be found each in his appropriate sphere, like our honored fellow members, to have done some service to the community or the State. Then, whether in the morning of life, or at its fervid bustling noon-day, or in the declining hour, we depart, our memories will be cherished, and our names implore the passing tribute of a sigh.”

One of the originators of the plan for the Geological Survey of the State, Dr. B. became one of its most ardent supporters, and under the successive Governors, he was entrusted with much of the supervision of the work. As evidence of the great part which he took in this labor, I subjoin the dedication of the 5th volume, on "agriculture," written by E. Emmons, M.D.

"To T. ROMEYN BECK, M.D. LL.D.:

"Sir: There is more than one reason why the concluding divisions of the present work, undertaken to explore and illustrate the Natural History of the State of New-York, and conducted under legislative patronage, should be dedicated to you.

"You were among the first to foster the enterprise, and remained its consistent advocate in times when adverse circumstances seemed to jeopardize its continuance; much more than this, your whole life has been assiduously engaged in promoting the advance of science and the spread of popular education, and the published results of your scientific and literary labors, may be referred to as reflecting an honor upon your native State. Would that the merits of the present volume were such as to render it more worthy its dedication."

The Legislature of 1850 confided to the Secretary of State, and to the Secretary of the Board of Regents, the supervision of the publication of the remainder of the Natural History of the State. The geological

survey having been protracted much beyond the period originally contemplated, and various claims existing in reference to it, the two officers named were required by law to report to the next Legislature what those claims were, and what contracts existed between the State and individuals for such of the work as remained to be completed. They were also required to report a plan for the final completion of the survey, and to submit estimates of the cost of such completion. Dr. Beck's acquaintance with the history of this work, and all the matters connected with it, was perhaps more complete than that of any other person in the State; and this fact led to the selection of the Secretary of the Regents (which post he then filled), as one of the Commissioners. Whether we look at the interests of the State or those of science, no better choice could have been made.

The reports of the Commissioners to the Legislature, show the good effects of the investigation made by them; and, judging from the order and system which the affair soon assumed under their hands, and the comparative economy which attended their expenditures and plans, it is hazarding little to say, that, had a permanent commission of this character been charged with the care of the survey from its outset, the work would have been more systematically pursued, and at an expense greatly less than that which the State has incurred.

Since 1841 he has occupied the office of Secretary of the Board of Regents; a position of great honor and trust.

The Regents have a supervisory charge of the educational interests of the State, and are required to report annually the condition of all the colleges and academies under their care. His reports made during the period of his incumbency are not only voluminous, but they are equally models of accuracy and of compactness.

But the supervision of colleges and of academies does by no means limit the powers and responsibilities of the Regents. To them is entrusted the care of the State Library, and of the State Cabinet of Natural History, with also the management of much of the foreign correspondence, and all of the literary or scientific international exchanges. Most of which various duties devolved officially upon Dr. Beck.

To his earnest devotion, and eminent qualifications, the State is therefore indebted for its large and judiciously selected library; and especially for its unrivalled collection of works on the history of this country and State.

In the language of Dr. E. H. Van Deusen, from whose brief but elegant biography, written for the American Journal of Insanity, I am indebted for several of the facts contained in this memoir:

“Dr. Beck has witnessed the adoption in this State, of a public system of education, elementary and

collegiate, alike thorough and successful; and as the crowning effort in the field of his severest, yet most congenial labor, a "State Library" which, for completeness of organization and beauty of arrangement, stands unrivaled, and for which, it may be remarked, the State of New-York is almost entirely indebted to his extended and complete knowledge of the history of literature and science, in which he had no equal in this country, if indeed anywhere."

Many years ago Dr. Beck became interested in the subject of a State Museum. In fact, while connected with the City Lyceum, established in the Albany Academy, he was industriously accumulating and depositing every thing of which he could possess himself, relating to history, or to natural science. A passion, which, it is well known, did not cease or abate, when his admission into the Board of Regents gave him a wider field for its exercise. To the State Library and the State Cabinet hereafter his time and talents were in no small degree directed; and such was his zeal in behalf of these institutions that he has not hesitated at times when the illiberal policy of individual members of the Legislature, hazarded the success of necessary appropriations, to give his personal pledge that the moneys should be judiciously applied, and by becoming, as it were, the endorser of the government, he has secured the recognition of the claims of these interests, and obtained the necessary supplies.

On the arrival of M. Vattemare in this country, Dr. Beck immediately saw the value of such a system of international exchange as was proposed, and became at once one of its warmest advocates; nor has he ever ceased to urge upon the successive Legislatures the continuance of the system; and even upon his death-bed he entreated, as a personal favor, that his friends would not forget the claims of this subject, in which he had always felt so deep an interest.

In a letter lately received, M. Vattemare writes—  
“The death of Dr. Beck deprives me of the best and most faithful friend I ever had, as well as of the most enlightened and active co-operator in the noble cause to which my life is devoted.      \*      \*      \*  
I thought that with my friend all was gone; but the recollection of his solicitude for the system of exchange, as well as his paternal anxiety for the State Library—that glorious monument of his patriotism and high knowledge—revived my courage, and with it the hope that those kind friends I have yet among the Regents of the University, and the recollection of the friendship of Dr. Beck for me, and of his association in my labors, would secure the continuation of their good will.”

Outside of his own peculiar sphere of duties, no object of public interest was undertaken without finding in him a warm supporter. When the project of a University in the city of Albany was started,

intended to supply, in some measure, the scientific and literary wants of the whole United States, Dr. Beck, while seeing clearly all the difficulties and discouragements attending such a scheme, did not fail to recognize its practical bearings, and his views, as may be seen by a reference to the sketch of his speech appended,\* were liberal and comprehensive.

Of the American Association of Science he was an active member, and rendered to it many services.

In obedience to those promptings of humanity which seem in a great measure to have determined his course in life—laboring always most zealously for those who were least able to appreciate his services, or to recognize them—he read before this society in 1837, a paper on the statistics of the deaf and dumb, which had the effect to direct the attention of the public and of the legislators more fully to the condition and necessities of this unfortunate class, and the results of which may be seen in the establishment in the city of New-York of a school for deaf mutes, unrivalled in the excellence of its system and in the perfection of its details.

By the act of its incorporation, in April, 1842, Dr. Beck was made one of the Board of Managers of the New-York State Lunatic Asylum, situated at Utica; and he has been re-appointed by the Governor and Senate at the expiration of each successive tri-ennial period. Upon the death of Mr. Munson, in 1854, he,

\* See Appendix.

although a non-resident member, was unanimously elected President of the Board. This important institution, established and endowed by the State upon a scale of almost unparalleled munificence, is no doubt indebted largely to Dr. Beck, for his wise counsels and efficient personal aid, which he has at all times freely contributed.

Dr. Beck was also an occasional contributor to the pages of the American Journal of Insanity, published at Utica under the editorial management of Dr. Brigham, the late principal: and when, upon the death of Dr. Brigham, in 1850, the management of the Journal fell into the hands of the Board, Dr. Beck was chosen its editor, a place which he continued to hold "until the close of the last volume, when advancing years and more imperative duties compelled him to relinquish his editorial connection."

Of the chief labor of Dr. Beck's life, and of that which has made his name illustrious wherever science and literature are cultivated, it still remains to speak. I allude to his work on "Medical Jurisprudence," and which no less reflects honor upon us as Americans, upon this city of his adoption, and upon you, gentlemen, who were his associates and fellow-members in this Society.

From how early a period in his life the subject of this work occupied his attention we may infer from the following brief extracts from letters written to his uncle, the Rev. J. B. Romeyn.

The first is dated in 1813:

"Permit me to press upon you the obtaining of one or the other of the French authors on legal medicine. It has long been a favorite idea with me to prepare a work on that subject, and should I be enabled to procure Fodere or Mahon, my design may be completed."

The second is dated June 30, 1814, and was addressed to his uncle at Lisbon, Portugal:

"As the communication is now open between Great Britain and France, you will doubtless be enabled to procure the books I wished. Dulan advertised them some years since." \* \* \* \*

On this topic I find ready at my hand nearly all that it is necessary to say, in a biographical notice of the author, contained in the first volume of an elegant publication, entitled, "The National Portrait Gallery of distinguished Americans," issued at New-York in the year 1834, under the auspices of the "American Academy of the Fine Arts."

In 1823, Dr. Beck published his work entitled 'Elements of Medical Jurisprudence,' in two volumes, octavo; which at the time, attracted great attention, and has since continued a standard work on the subject of which it treats. The science of medical jurisprudence is one of great interest and importance. It treats of all those questions, in which the testimony of a medical man may be required before courts of justice, and from the nature of many of the ques-

tions, it is obvious that their discussion requires the widest range of medical and scientific knowledge. Although deeply studied in Italy, France and Germany, this science had scarcely attracted any attention, either in this country or in England, previous to the publication of the work of Dr. Beck. To him is certainly due the high credit, not merely of rousing public attention to an important and neglected subject, but also of presenting a work upon it which will probably never be entirely superseded. In foreign countries, its merits have been duly appreciated and magnanimously acknowledged. The Edinburg Medical and Surgical Journal says of it, vol. 22, p. 179, (1824,):

“We undertake this task with the greater pleasure on the present occasion, that we shall have to throw aside, for the first time on medico-legal subjects, the character of the austere critic. It has been our misfortune to handle with some freedom, almost all previous works on the subject. And we have been induced to handle them more freely than many may have thought was called for, because we apprehend that all early works on medical jurisprudence, especially of the systematic kind, should be viewed with peculiar jealousy by every one interested in its progress. For as it is now circumstanced, languishing still in its infancy, and struggling against the supineness, indifference and prejudices of those who ought to be its most zealous protectors; no greater mischief

could happen than that systematic treatises on it should pass without warning into the hands of the public, which, however meritorious, are nevertheless, not on a level with its state of advancement, and do not present an expanded view of its general spirit and practical applications.

"At length, however, the English language may boast, that it is possessed of a general work on medical jurisprudence, which will not only stand comparison with the best of the kind that the continent has produced, but which may also be referred to by every medical jurist as a monument worthy of his science, and as a criterion by which he is willing that its interest and utility should be tried.

"Under the unassuming title of *Elements of Medical Jurisprudence*, Doctor Beck has presented us with a comprehensive system, which embraces almost every valuable fact or doctrine relating to it. Each of its diversified departments has been investigated so minutely, that few cases can occur in practice, on which it will be necessary to seek elsewhere for farther information. At the same time by studying succinctness and shunning those verbose oratorical details with which other writers, and particularly those of France abound, he has succeeded in rendering his treatise comprehensive within a singularly moderate compass. We may securely assert, that a work on the subject is not to be found in any language, which displays so much patient and discrimi-

nating research, with so little of the mere ostentation of learning. The opinions expressed both on general principles and on the particular questions which have occurred in courts of law, are given clearly and judiciously. There are few occasions, even where the points at issue are difficult and obscure, on which persons of skill and experience will be disposed to differ materially with him."

In the various medical colleges of Great Britain, there has been, we believe, no text book on medical jurisprudence positively adopted; but we have been informed that Dr. Beck's work has been for years recommended to students by professors.

In 1828, it was translated into German, at Weimar, and has been favorably received in various parts of the continent of Europe.

It is not alone the physician and the jurist who are indebted to Dr. Beck for this essential work; but it has proved to the general reader, we believe invariably, a fund of interesting information; and we will venture to say that no one has ever risen from its perusal without experiencing an agreeable surprise, that a subject so uninviting in its title, should afford so much amusement. The remarks of a writer in Blackwood's Magazine agree so well with our own experience, that we cannot do better than adopt them. "The ignorant state in which jurymen continually come to the consideration of points of medical evidence, on criminal trials, is lamentable. In regard

to men of any habits of reading it is really sinful; and certainly not the less so, because the works which they ought to read and master happen to be about the most interesting and amusing books in the world."

To these testimonials we will only add, that the work has already passed through five American, and four London, besides the German edition. In the preface to the first London edition which was published as early as 1825, with notes, by Dr. Wm. Dunlap, the editor says:

"We do not claim for the present work the meed of a faultless performance, but we fear not to challenge a comparison of it with any of the English works in scientific accuracy, philosophical plainness and precision of style, extent of research, genuine scholarship and erudition, pointedness of illustration, and copiousness of detail and reference to original documents."

Says a bibliographer, in a notice of the German edition, "Among the numerous and unequivocal evidences of the very high estimation in which Dr. Beck's 'Elements of Jurisprudence' are held by the profession in Europe, their translation into the German language must be regarded as the most flattering and decisive indication of their true value. In no country has this interesting and varied science been prosecuted with such unabated zeal, or have so much learning and research been elicited on its several

curious topics, as in Germany. From the time of Zachias, indeed, to the present day it has been the favorite object of study with German physicians, and their opinions of the merits of any treatise on the subject are therefore entitled to the highest weight and the most respectful consideration. Proud are we, therefore, to see them prize the performance of our learned countryman so high as to deem it worthy of transfusion into their vernacular tongue. In his native language his work is as yet without a parallel."

Although the two volumes originally comprised more than 2000 pages octavo, yet to each successive American edition he did not fail to add largely from his apparently inexhaustible stores of knowledge and research. Nor even here did his labors cease, but he continued to contribute almost to the period of his death to one or more of the medical or scientific journals of the country, such additional facts or discoveries as from time to time came to his knowledge. In the American Journal of Medical Science, edited by Dr. Hays, may be found many of his most valuable papers.

Says a distinguished writer for that periodical, in reviewing the tenth edition of his *Medical Jurisprudence*: "The pages of this journal, for many years past, have borne constant evidence of the untiring and invaluable research of Dr. Beck, whose observations and extracts from foreign and domestic sources have filled that portion of it devoted to medical

jurisprudence; and the writer of the present notice bears his testimony to the same effect; for, having taken much interest in the subject, and consequently had occasion to examine the journals, he found it impossible to furnish a single novelty to this department in which he had not been anticipated by Dr. Beck."

Nor is there perhaps, any testimony more pertinent as to the rank occupied by Dr. Beck in the literary and scientific world, than the large number of societies, both abroad and at home, which conferred upon him either honorary or active memberships. Among others less known we may mention the New-York Historical Society, of which he was elected a member in 1813; Physico Medical Society, N. Y., 1813; Antiquarian Soc., Mass., 1816; Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, 1816; Lyceum of Natural History, N. Y., 1817; American Geological Society, New-Haven, 1819; Natural Hist. Soc., Montreal, 1821; Hon. member of Med. Soc., London, 1824; Medical Society, Quebec, 1824; Cor. member Linnean Soc., Paris, 1826; Hon. member Med. Soc., Conn., 1826; Society of Emulation, Charleston, S. C., 1827; Med. Soc. of New-Hampshire, 1828; Associate of the College of Phys., Philadelphia, 1829; Hon. member of Royal Med. Soc. of Edinburgh, 1832; of Meteorological Society, London, 1838; of American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 1839; of Med. Soc. of Rhode Island, 1839; National Institu-

tion for the promotion of science, Washington, 1840; Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1841; Amer. Ethnological Soc. 1842; Northern Academy of Arts and Sciences, Dartmouth, 1845; Cor. fellow of New-York Academy of Medicine, 1847; Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, Copenhagen, 1848; Histor. Soc., Vermont, 1850; American Statistical Soc., Boston, 1851; State Historical Society, Wisconsin, 1854. The degree of LL. D. has been conferred upon him by the Mercersburg College, Penn., and by Rutgers College, N. J.

Dr. Beck enjoyed during his life, almost uninterrupted health, the result, we suspect, of a good natural constitution, and of temperate, regular, and, so far at least as his literary pursuits would permit, active habits.

The following account of his last illness and of the autopsy,\* is too interesting to admit of abridgement, and I shall make no apology for its introduction. It was furnished at my request by his attending physician, Dr. S. D. Willard, of this city, who visited him from the earliest stage of his illness, and whose personal care and devotion, as well as that of Dr. Hun, who was called in counsel, toward the close of his life, was most faithful, unremitting, and far exceeding all claims of professional duty.

“Dr. Beck suffered from an attack of indigestion in the early part of January, 1854. It was at a time

\* See Appendix.

when he was busily engaged in his official duties, and although he placed himself under medical treatment, and was visited twice daily by his physician, he did not allow himself, as I remember, to be deterred from going to his office for a single day. He recovered from this attack in two weeks, and with the exception of a slight paroxysm of gout, he enjoyed nearly his usual health during the remainder of the year.

In February, 1855, he was again taken ill, and the symptoms with which his illness began were precisely similar to those of the year previous. The weather was intensely cold, and he was induced on account of it to remain at home for a few days, though he was quite unwilling to admit the necessity of such regimen. The symptoms did not yield as readily as they had done before; he experienced great uneasiness about the stomach and bowels; his appetite not only failed, but he felt nausea at the very mention of either food or medicine; he complained greatly of weakness, but was almost invariably invigorated by his sleep at night. He was so much better at the end of a fortnight as to go out, and this he continued to do nearly every day, utterly regardless of the weather, and appeared to be daily gaining strength until the last of March, when the symptoms returned upon him, as violent as they had been at first; but they again yielded after a week or ten days, and with the exception of his not having regained his strength,

he appeared for a little time nearly recovered. We looked forward to the return of mild weather with confident expectation that his health would be restored. During the month of May he was daily at his office, and continued his labors and researches with his accustomed untiring industry. About the first of June he visited his daughter, Mrs. Van Cortlandt, at Croton, and while there he had a recurrence of some of his unpleasant symptoms, though they were less severe than in preceding attacks. His visit at Croton was brief, and he returned again to pursue his labors beyond the measure of his strength. At length he yielded to the solicitations of his friends to make his summer visit to Lake George a few weeks earlier than usual, and this in the belief that total relaxation would prove of the desired benefit to him. Here, however, he indulged less in the social pleasures and rural sports than had for many years been his practice. Occasionally he went out on the lake for fish, and once he joined a party that had arranged to dine on a rock about five miles down the lake. He went and returned in a row boat, and though much fatigued, bore the exertion better than could have been expected. [August 29.] His very nature gave him a keen relish for such pleasures, but he now united in them with reluctance. He became averse to exercise, and much of the time was passed with his friends on the piazza of the hotel, or in his own room, re-perusing some favorite volume. Scarcely a

week passed without the return of some of his annoying symptoms, and notwithstanding he thought himself getting better, he was becoming weaker and losing flesh. He returned from Lake George on the 7th September. His journey home greatly fatigued him, and he found himself obliged to send for his physician the next day. Medication almost uniformly brought him present relief, but it did not serve to eradicate the morbid condition to which his system had become subjected. He continued to go to the State Library until the 15th of September, when he left it for the last time.

Until the present there was, to my mind, no positive indications of other than functional derangement in his case. He was very weak, and had not only lost his full, portly habit, but had become greatly emaciated. His appetite, at times, was good, but not uniformly so. The food he took did not appear to *assimilate with and nourish* his body, although it was generally well digested. He retired early, slept quietly, and maintained his fixed habit of rising at five or six o'clock in the morning. He had not, thus far, suffered any severe pain during the progress of his illness; the recurrence of nausea gave him great uneasiness, and he complained likewise of lassitude and debility, but not of pain.

For several years he had, at times, been afflicted with paroxysms of dyspnoea, and he assured me that the pulsations of his heart had "always been irregu-

lar." Since he had become so feeble, these had increased to such an extent as to indicate that they were occasioned by disease of the heart—but they lacked essentially some of the peculiarities which would be expected in advanced disease of that organ.

It was at this time that Dr. Hun, who had seen him at intervals while visiting other members of the family, united with me in regular attendance. So great a change had taken place in his appearance, that it now became manifest that the disease was making rapid inroads upon his remaining strength, and was advancing to a fatal termination.

The doctor consented to remain quiet for a few days; it was without a realization of his own feebleness. He consented, not because he admitted the necessity of quietude, but because his physicians positively enjoined it. He still looked forward, one week after another, to the time when he should be able to resume his duties, and appointed several days when he hoped to go out; but, when the time came, he felt that his strength was insufficient to the effort, and consented readily to abide the advice of his attendants and friends.

During these weeks of confinement, he was uniformly cheerful, and looked on the bright side of his own case. He seldom complained of pain, and was rather unwilling to admit that he suffered any. He rarely inquired particularly about the nature of his disease, nor did he evince anxiety about the manner

in which it might terminate. Thus he continued until late in October, when, upon the suggestion of his daughters, he consented to an arrangement for a consultation with Dr. Willard Parker, of New-York, who had been the physician of his brother, Dr. John B. Beck, and who is likewise a warm personal friend of the family.

The evening before Dr. Parker came (October 24), he spoke more freely of himself than he had previously done. It was conclusive to me then, that the character of his malady had not escaped his own careful observation. He said to me: "I don't altogether give up my own case yet, but I have lived long enough to wear out my constitution—and, whatever is the result, I must be content." These were the first words indicating that he regarded his condition critical. The next morning he was visited by Dr. Parker, together with Dr. Hun and myself. He received us with great composure and cheerfulness, and made a clear, full statement of his case, speaking of himself as if he was not the person interested in the examination.

After the consultation, we returned to his room, and Dr. Parker taking his seat by him kindly said, "Now Doctor we have asked you a great many questions, are there any you would like to ask us?" His reply was strictly characteristic of himself as a man of few words. He did not seek to evade the result of this investigation, but arrived at once at the conclu-

sion, by a single question that covered the whole subject, "can you get me well?" Dr. Parker told him that we were unable to detect organic disease, but there was a suspension in the process of assimilation, his food digested but did not assimilate, "the engine," said he, "you have, but the fuel fails to make it work." Again he asked "can you get in fuel that will?" The answers to these pointed enquiries were necessarily of a negative character; to which he replied, "You make out my case very unfavorably." In the afternoon of the same day, I found him cheerful, without having been fatigued by the morning interview, and he expressed some confidence in the efficacy of the nitro-muriatic acid sponge bath which was suggested by Dr. Parker.

Until the 11th November no special change occurred; he slept more than usual, and at night comfortably, awaking at his accustomed hour in the morning; he sat up nearly every day for a short time, and often devoted a part of this to business; his books and his papers were around him, and he still devoted himself to them with untiring industry; although he was sick, he did not know how to be idle. I visited him at all hours, and I always found him with a book in his hand; when he retired at night, it was with lights arranged by his bedside that he might read until he fell asleep.

With the first loss of sleep, (Nov. 11,) came total prostration, he was unable longer to take nourishment,

and soon began what appeared to be the process of dying; of this he was fully aware, yet no murmur escaped his lips, nor the wish that the termination might be averted. (Nov. 14.) His breathing became gradually more difficult, and his extremities cold, he was exceedingly restless, but uniformly answered "no" when asked if he was suffering. Each hour appeared for two or three days to be his last, but he rallied again however, and remarked of the wonderful tenacity of his constitution, and expressed surprise that he lived so long. "It is hard breaking the chain," and then he asked "Is not this a long struggle?" "How long have I been in it?" To my reply "more than twenty-four hours," he asked, "do you think it will last much longer?" Addressing his daughters, who were by his bedside, he said "I had a coldness, a sort of spasm in my side last night, that was near my idea of the coming on of death; I have thought my case over, it is a remarkable complaint, don't you all think so?" And at the same time he expressed his conviction that he must have organic disease.

At another time, when he thought his daughters greatly fatigued by prolonged attention to him, gazing upon them with paternal tenderness, he said, "I am sorry to tire you so; I wish it was over." Thus, in his last hours, he did not fail to regard the comfort of others before himself. His hearing continued acute, and his mind clear and calm through those hours of protracted dissolution, although he was so weak that

he could not converse. Thus he lingered until the morning of the 19th. A few hours preceding his death, Mrs. Parmelee was sitting by his side, when he asked, "Where is Catharine?" (Mrs. Van Cortlandt); immediately she was with him. He pressed her hand in token of recognition, gazed upon them for a moment, and then closed his eyes forever. His breathing became quiet, fainter, and still more faint, until at length, gently as sleeps a child, the slumber of death came upon him. And thus passed away this great man, on the 19th of November, 1855, at the age of sixty-four years and three months. Mr. and Mrs. Parmelee, Mrs. Van Cortlandt and myself, were with him when he died.

During the whole period of his illness, his daughters watched him with the utmost filial devotion and tenderness. They were almost constantly with him, anticipating every want, and administering every comfort. His last hours were not only soothed by their presence, their words of kindness and love, but by their earnest prayers that he might be sustained by his Heavenly Father in the eventful hour that still awaited him.

To the inquiry, so natural to one who reflects upon the life and labors of our deceased associate, "How has any man been able to accomplish so much in a single life?" The reply is,—it was the result of system, indomitable perseverance, of ardent devotion and honesty of purpose, united to excellent talents.

But no one quality so much contributed to his extraordinary attainments as that methodical improvement of time which he adopted from the first and retained to almost the last hours of his life. Every duty had its time and place, with which no other duties were allowed to interfere. A given portion of each day was assigned to a particular subject, and this arrangement was not to be interfered with. The morning study was never postponed to the evening, nor relaxation nor miscellaneous reading permitted until the allotted tasks were respectively dispatched. Having determined also upon any great purpose it was never relinquished until it was accomplished. With him there was no vacillation or uncertainty of design; and at his death nothing seems to have been left unfinished, but that one labor which he had undertaken, too late for its full completion, a memoir of his early friend and counsellor, the lamented DeWitt Clinton. A work for which his long and intimate acquaintance, his sympathy of feelings and tastes, with his rare literary attainments eminently qualified him.

They were alike men of talents, education, system and perseverance: each labored for the public good rather than for private interest: each entertained enlarged and almost prophetic views of State and National policy; each selected judiciously the time and means for the attainment of their great purposes.

De Witt Clinton was a statesman, but no less a philosopher and a patriot. T. Romeyn Beck was a physician, but no less a scholar and a philanthropist. De Witt Clinton sought to penetrate the State with the commerce of the world, and to develop by this means also its agricultural resources. Beck sought to determine its mineral wealth, and thus to encourage its manufactories, with which both agriculture and commerce are mutually allied. Operating in different channels, their ends and aims were the same, and it would be difficult to say to whom the citizens of this prosperous State owe the most, to the illustrious statesman, or to the no less illustrious physician.

No one will deny the comparison, which neither detracts from the merits of the one, nor exalts invidiously the claims of the other.

More than two years ago, at the earnest solicitation of the Clinton family, Dr. Beck had consented to write his life, and was furnished with the large and valuable collection of papers belonging to the family. He had already made some progress in arranging and digesting these materials when disease arrested the prosecution of a work, which, there is reason to believe, would have been such a biography as the illustrious statesman deserved, and such, probably, as none but Dr. Beck, who had so long shared his intimacy and confidence, could have written.

In his domestic relations, Dr. Beck was kind and affectionate. I hesitate, even in a biographical memoir, to invade the sanctity of private life; but I must yield to an impulse which instructs me to value the example of a pure and unsullied character in its relations to home and to the social circle.

To his wife, who died in 1823, at the early age of 31 years, a woman of rare accomplishments and of refined sentiments, he was devotedly attached; and I am told that the greater part of his work on Medical Jurisprudence was written while watching at her bedside during her last and painfully protracted illness—a most touching memorial to her virtues and to the kindness of his own heart.

Of his brothers, he was the oldest; and although accustomed always to exercise over them a kind of paternal care, he was singularly attached to them; and when, one after another, they died, until he alone was left, he has seemed to suffer the most poignant grief; and especially did the death of his last and youngest brother—the late Lewis C. Beck—with whom his associations and his pursuits were the most constant, fall heavily upon him.

His mother—that venerated woman, who herself had watched over his infancy, and guided him carefully through his youth, up to manhood—found under his roof a welcome shelter in her declining years, where at all times her wants were more than supplied, and her counsels and precepts were reverentially

respected. Brought up under her father's care, her education was solid and judicious, and, until the last three or four years of her life, when her mind gave way, she preserved her interest in all literary pursuits. She lived to see all her children attain eminence and respectability, and died at last at the advanced age of 85 years.

Dr. Beck had no sons. His two daughters, Catharine, wife of Pierre Van Cortlandt, Esq., of Westchester, and Helen, wife of Hon. William Parmelee, of Albany, still live to attest his inestimable worth and to exemplify his virtues.

In the presence of strangers, Dr. Beck was somewhat reserved, and not unfrequently seemed unsocial; but with his more intimate acquaintances he was remarkably free, affable, and unrestrained; and through all his familiar social conversations there was a rich vein of humor mingling with the profounder currents of thought and discussion.

His knowledge of books was not confined to scientific treatises. He read most of the standard works in history, romance, poetry, and in all departments of light literature. He read rapidly, and soon possessed himself of the meaning or value of any author; which faculty, united to a retentive memory, made him almost the final umpire wherever questions of text or of authority arose. In the language of one who knew him intimately, and who had been a collaborer with him in the establishment of the State

Library, "His knowledge of what I would call the science of literature, I have never seen equalled."

He was liberal to the poor, and kind to all. Not even the brutes escaped his sympathy. Cruelty to animals excited in him always the most intense disapprobation.

His belief in the divine revelation, and in its doctrines, as held by the great body of Protestant Christians, was firm, decided and often expressed; and he could never tolerate any attempts on the part of any person to impugn or to throw discredit upon them.

In conclusion, I beg to repeat the language and judgment of a well known gentleman who had spent several summers in his society at Lake George, Mr. George Ticknor, of Boston. In a letter written during the illness of Dr. Beck, he says: "I have known few men of so faithful a nature as he was, and still fewer in whom, on a more continuous acquaintance, I have been so much interested. The amount of his knowledge, and the eagerness with which he pursues it, are remarkable; but not more so than the excellent use to which he puts it all."

Also, of an intimate personal friend, the Rev. Dr. J. N. Campbell, of Albany, who was his pastor for some years and his associate as a member of the Board of Regents: "I think that the secret of that respect and regard which Dr. Beck had acquired in the community, and which he enjoyed in a measure

rarely attained by any man, is to be found in his industry and disinterestedness, and these were prominent features in his character. He was the most laborious man I ever knew. He never lost a minute, and we all know how much he accomplished; yet he never appeared in anything he did to be seeking to acquire position or honor for himself—and I have repeatedly remaked that, in speaking of the results of his labors, he was always careful to give all the credit to his associates and to claim nothing for himself.” \* \* \* “He was a remarkably pure minded man—of true honor, above all meanness, and of the sternest integrity.”

It has been my desire, gentlemen, to present you with an impartial history of our deceased associate, in which his services should not on the one hand be undervalued, nor on the other magnified into undue importance. I have sought to be brief, and yet to omit nothing which posterity might some time wish to know of that man whose cotemporaries have every where greeted him with such sentiments of applause, and whose name will hereafter reflect so much honor upon our age and country.

Upon you, gentlemen, new duties now devolve. The burdens of those who fall must be divided equally among those who remain, in order that the great work of the advancement of human knowledge may not be delayed. To each must be assigned a share—

and they must see to it that the night does not overtake them before their allotted task is done, and they "steal inglorious to the silent grave."

It was not so with him whose last rites we have now performed. And as we deposit the urn in which we have thus carefully gathered his consecrated ashes, let us carry away with us some of those sacred fires which gave inspiration to his genius, and which still continue to shed a halo of light around his tomb. For

"Lives of great men all remind us  
We may make our lives sublime,  
And departing, leave behind us,  
Foot-prints on the sands of time."

## APPENDIX.

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### AUTOPSY OF DR. T. ROMEYN BECK.

[Furnished by Dr. Willard.]

Present—Drs. Jas. McNaughton, March, Armsby, H. Townsend, Boyd, Cogswell, Hun and Willard.

The examination was held November 20, twenty-nine hours after death.

The LUNGS were healthy.

The HEART was large, measuring from the apex, transversely, seven inches. There was, in patches, on the surface of the heart, especially near the posterior surface, near the origin of the blood vessels, a soft fibrinous deposit, which was easily rubbed off. The walls of the left ventricle were from an inch to an inch and one-eighth in thickness. The aortic valves were thick and opaque. There was slight calcareous deposit on the mitral valve, with thickening and induration.

The CORONARY arteries were ossified.

The HEPATIC ARTERY was thickened and indurated.

The LIVER was congested and healthy, excepting the ramifications of the hepatic artery; these were indurated.

The STOMACH.—The mucous membrane of the stomach was of a greyish color, except at the posterior part, where it was congested, and lined with a bloody mucus.

There was thickening and induration of the pyloric orifice.

The KIDNEYS were somewhat shrivelled on the surface, but the texture was healthy.

The most remarkable appearance was the extreme emaciation. In health Dr. Beck weighed two hundred and ten pounds; at the time of his death he weighed not over one hundred pounds, and possibly not over ninety. He was fat, not muscular. Here then is a loss of one hundred and ten pounds certainly, and possibly one hundred and twenty pounds! [The change in his personal appearance was so great by this loss that his most intimate friends and colleagues could not recognise in his features any thing to remind them of Dr. Beck.]

The progress of his illness was from February, 1855.\* The heart was evidently in a state of hypertrophy, but the immediate cause of his death was  
DEFECT IN HIS POWER TO ASSIMILATE.

\* Period of illness 9½ months, though confined to the house only nine weeks.

NOTE.—Dr. Lewis C. Beck died in a similar manner. He was a spare man, and having no fat to consume, his illness continued only a few weeks. Dr. T. Romeyn lived until he had consumed over one hundred pounds.

Dr. Parker informed me that the arteries in Dr. John B. Beck were ossified (those in the trunk); he compared them to *macaroni*. A similar condition had, to some extent, taken place in Dr. T. R. Beck.

*The annexd is a list of offices which he filled, and societies to which he was elected, etc.*

Alms House Physician, Albany, . . . . .	1811
Fellow of the College of Phys. and Surg., N. Y.,	1811
Medical Society, State of New-York, . . . . .	1813
New-York Historical Society, New-York, . . . .	1813
Member of Physico-Medical Society, New-York,	1815
Trustee of the Albany Academy, . . . . .	1815
Professor of the Institutes of Med., Fairfield, . .	1815
Hon. Mem. of Academy of Nat. Sciences, Phila.,	1816
Receiving Officer of Antiquarian Society, Mass.,	1816
Hon. Mem. Lyceum of Natural History, N. Y.,	1817
Hon. Mem. Amer. Geolog. Soc., New-Haven, . .	1819
Hon. Mem. Medical Society, <i>London</i> , . . . . .	1824
Hon. Mem. Medical Society, <i>Quebec</i> , . . . . .	1824
Corresponding Member Linnean Society, <i>Paris</i> ,	1826
Hon. Mem. Medical Society, Connecticut, . . . .	1826
Hon. Mem. Nat. Hist. Society, <i>Montreal</i> , . . . .	1827
Senior Hon. Mem. Med. Soc. of Emulation of Charleston, . . . . .	1827
Hon. Mem. Med. Soc. of New-Hampshire, . . . .	1828
Associate of the College of Physicians, Phila.,	1829
Hon. Mem. of the Ithaca Lyceum, . . . . .	1830
Hon. Mem. of the West Point Lyceum, . . . . .	1830
Mem. Albany County Agricultural Society, . . .	1830
Hon. Mem. Royal Medical Society, <i>Edinburgh</i> ,	1832
Philosophical Society, Rutgers College, . . . . .	1833
Prof. Materia Medica and Med. Juris., Fairfield,	1836
Hon. Mem. Meteorological Society, <i>London</i> , . .	1838

- Hon. Mem. Amer. Philosophical Society, Phila., 1839  
Hon. Mem. Medical Society, Rhode Island, . . . 1839  
Hon. Mem. Nat. Institution for Promotion Sci-  
ence, *Wash.*, . . . . . 1840  
Hon. Mem. Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1841  
Hon. Mem. Amer. Ethnological Society, N. Y., 1842  
Hon. Mem. North. Acad. Arts and Sciences,  
Dartmouth, . . . . . 1843  
Corresponding Fellow of N. Y. Acad. of Med., 1847  
Degree of LL.D., Mercersburg, Pa., . . . . . 1849  
Degree of LL.D., Rutgers Col., New-Brunswick.  
President of Albany Institute.  
Royal Soc. of North. Antiquarians, *Copenhagen*, 1843  
Hon. Mem. Historical Society, Vermont, . . . . . 1850  
Hon. Mem. American Statistical Soc., Boston, . 1851  
Hon. Mem. State Historical Society, Wisconsin, 1854  
Trustee State Lunatic Asylum and President  
Board of Trustees.  
Pres. of the Board of Trustees Albany Acad., . 1852  
Mem. Executive Com. of the Normal School.  
Emeritus-Professor Albany Medical College, . . 1854

## UNIVERSITY OF ALBANY.

*Remarks of DR. T. ROMEYN BECK, on the proposed establishment of a University, made in the Capitol before the Literary Convention and the Legislature, March 30, 1854.*

I beg to say that the plan presented by our respected president, is one which meets my hearty approbation. It includes very many of the subjects required to be taught in the proposed University—all of them are more or less imperatively called for by the wants of the times and of the country. If the objects set forth are not immediately accomplished, as for a few years can scarcely be expected, still the necessity will become more and more apparent.

I have, however, been accustomed of late, to look at this matter in a somewhat different point of view. The remark has been frequently made, and I have not been insensible to its bearing, that the proposed new institution will, even if successful, be only another college added to the too many already in operation. We must endeavor to avoid this. We must also, especially, take care that in anything now to be done, we do not run counter to the system of instruction at present existing. I lay it down as a settled proposition, that the present course of instruction in the various States of the Union, from common schools up to schools of law, divinity and medicine, is a good one. It may have defects which require

amendment, but not its destruction. In all that we do, we should look to its stability. We shall lose every thing by undermining or endeavoring to supplant it. All who were at all conversant with the system of education in our own State, forty years ago, will fully appreciate the improvements that have been made, and they have a right to imagine an onward and forward course hereafter. The want of a sufficient complement of competent teachers in our common schools, academies and colleges, although manifest at the period referred to, is rapidly being supplied. An University in this country, on the broad, liberal and enlightened policy, that has been foreshadowed, would be a mighty agent in meeting such deficiencies.

The first practical question then, is, whether a University in the most extended sense of the term is needed? I answer emphatically that it is. And for this purpose, we need a co-operation of feeling and interest, not so much for expensive buildings and broad lands, as for supplying the museums, apparatus and other appliances that may be necessary for explanation and elucidation. Above all and first of all, we want eminent professors, accomplished in their respective branches of knowledge, and lastly, we need students to attend them.

What shall be the system of instruction? Are the Latin and Greek languages to be taught? Certainly not, in the ordinary sense of the term. We have

already in this State alone, some one hundred and sixty academies, and some seven or eight colleges, in which the study of these is pursued. And if the teachers be competent, we do not need an University for that purpose.

But it is very desirable to have a professor, or professors, who are perfect masters of those languages, intimately acquainted with all the authors of each; in one word, capable of fully illustrating the literature of both. Such men are not easily obtained. They in a great degree make themselves in any country. They are known by their works.

You cannot expect that they will be attended by large classes, and this renders it the more imperative to endow professorships for them. Even in the most favorable event, the number to be instructed will be few. What is now the mode of preparation for such an office? The individual goes to Europe—to Germany.

Even if we establish such professorships, it may still be highly proper for their incumbents to visit foreign countries. But I look forward to the time when this may not be absolutely required. We owe something on the score of national character, to take part in and foster this higher instruction—to form men among ourselves, who shall be equally learned and as fully prepared to instruct in this as the most renowned of other countries.

Dr. Beck here alluded to a fact mentioned by the Rev. Dr. Robinson, in his papers on University education in Germany. At one of these institutions, a teacher in a branch of classical literature, had but a single auditor, and still this person was so devoted to his profession and the cause of learning, that he was as untiring in his lectures, as those with large classes.

The same remarks will, in a great degree, apply to the study of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. These branches of knowledge are now largely and extensively taught. We have most able professors in many of our colleges—but still it is impossible to do full justice to them in a sub-graduate course.

We require persons to expound their application to the useful arts and the ordinary purposes of life. Civil engineering, for example, should be taught on an extended scale and with larger appliances. How much of the comfort, safety and life of the travelling community is dependent on the proper care and management of railroads and steamboats? How many accidents upon both are occasioned by want of knowledge, and hence imperfect structure. How much mischief results from an ignorance of, or incomplete acquaintance with first principles? What grievous destruction originates from a want of study of the metal that forms so material an instrument in the architecture of both. To some of my hearers, the great improvement produced by the introduction

of the hot blast must be familiar. Indeed I know of no subject in the physical sciences that better deserves the establishment of an independent professorship than that of IRON, its chemical characters, its manufacture and its application.

Then as to the engineers. They are frequently more rapidly promoted to that position, than the knowledge of the duties they are to perform will warrant. Therefore, means should be afforded to them for enlarging and increasing that knowledge. I consider this subject as most worthy of reflection, eminently deserving of careful attention and consideration. It is vitally connected with the safety of the community, and without its proper appreciation, the casualties and accidents that have already occurred will not be diminished.

But along with these needs and fully and readily conceding that many departments of useful and elegant literature and moral science should find a place in the proposed University, there still remains many specific wants, which could readily be made subjects of successful investigation, if fostered by public or private beneficence. For example: we need *professors of Natural History*, both in its enlarged sense, and in its numerous and important subdivisions. This is a wide subject, embracing a broad field of investigation, and daily requiring more and more studious application, on account of the branches of science that are constantly brought to bear on its

proper elucidation. Look at the most recent one, that is now becoming a subject of great popular interest, viz., Microscopy. It is already successfully applied to the development of the intimate structure of man and of the inferior animals.

We want a professor of *Physical Geography and Meteorology*. This is peculiarly called for, on account of the important bearing of the latter subject on the safety of Navigation. It has been asserted of late years, that a ship can outride a storm. Certainly we know, that if the barometer was generally studied, many dangers might be avoided. What higher object can be proposed to a man of science, than to develope and arrange the many results that even now could be collected from the great mass of facts already accumulated. We need a *professor of the General Health*, or as it is also styled of *Public Hygiene*. This subject is the particular care of several of the governments of Europe. France, Holland, Belgium, and latterly the English government has given considerable attention to it. The construction of buildings in towns and cities—the condition of the sewerage—the number of persons that should be allowed to inhabit a tenement—the nature of the water that is used—the adaptation of proper means for analysing it—the allowance or disallowance of various kinds of manufactorys—the construction of public baths—all these are but items of the great subject lying so closely at

the foundation and preservation of the health and prosperity of a community.

Nor let those, who reside in the country suppose that such an appointment is not needed by them. How often do epidemic or endemic diseases occur there, and frequently from slight and unnoticed causes, that only require scientific investigation to avoid or to remedy.

We require the appointment, under public authority, of a *Professor of Medical Jurisprudence or Forensic Medicine*. It is not possible to do full justice to this subject in Medical Colleges—we teach there what is known; we want a person or persons who shall ascertain, if possible, the unknown; and great as have been the discoveries of late years in this science, still the cunning of the murderer has frequently outrun them. Why should not men, duly qualified, be appointed to such an office, who, by their researches, would be far in advance of those who, by secret, and in some cases almost unknown means, prevent detection in the commission of crime. There is a person now living,\* the certainty of whose knowledge on the power of poisons is such, that he is not only called to examine cases in every part of France, but not long since was summoned to Belgium in one which at the time, attracted the attention of all Europe. I hold that there should be two or three

\* Dr. Orfila. The next mail from abroad brought the news of his death.

persons of this character appointed and paid by the government to perform this important duty.

It is impossible for our public institutions to support professorships in these various and accumulating sciences and branches of sciences. You require the aid of the government, or what is still better, private individuals must come forward, foster and support them.

Addressing myself to an audience partly composed of members of the Legislature, I submit, with great deference, that there are certain subjects which most particularly claim their care and endowment.

For example, a *Professor of Statistics* might be appointed with great advantage to the community. His duties would be laborious, but how much time and money might be saved were he to compare, analyse and determine, what has been accomplished as to prisons, hospitals, asylums, and, indeed, the whole range of our corrective and beneficent institutions. How much useful information is even now gained by examining the returns of the census and of annual bills of mortality. I can only glance at this subject, nor can I do more with another, and which may be styled a professorship of *Comparative Law and Legislation*. Reform is on foot, even under absolute governments. One State is borrowing from another. Great efforts are making to simplify and condense the laws under which we live.

It is not within the bounds of possibility that men elected for one or two years to the Legislature are competent to grapple with these subjects. They should be furnished at the public expense with all the preliminary information that genius and industry can devise.

And now, in concluding these hasty and not sufficiently digested remarks, I return to the point at which I commenced. I fear that the plan proposed by our president is scarcely attainable until after a series of years. Constitutional scruples will be interposed. Session after session in Congress, even if the subject were allowed a hearing, would be consumed in the discussion, nor would the sanction of Washington, of a National University, as expressed in his will, be sufficiently regarded.

It only remains to call on State and private patronage. I consider it to be conceded, from the general interest that has now for several years been expressed on this subject, that there is a need of such an institution, in its broadest sense, without encroaching on any other existing one, but in fact, being rather accessory to it. The wants of the masses call for it, for it is impossible to establish such an one, without having a number of free seats.

There is an important branch of learning to which I have not as yet adverted, and that is physical astronomy, and its most important bearings on commerce

and navigation. I have not spoken of it until now, because I wish to bring its encouragement prominently forward as a model and an example for future action.

Through the noble-hearted generosity of a lady in this city, ample provision has been made for the erection and endowment of an Observatory,—a most enduring monument to the memory of her deceased husband, who held a conspicuous position during his life, and whose memory is cherished by all who enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance.

This Dudley Observatory is the commencement. What we now ask for, is that our wealthy men, who by their commercial, financial, or professional pursuits, have been eminently successful—men who have acquired the title of merchant princes among us—men whose hands are open for every object of private or public beneficence, should come forward, and endow and thus found one or more professorships. Every such single endowment may, and doubtless will lead to another. I have no doubt that the sum of from \$10,000 to \$15,000 would be amply sufficient for that purpose. This would truly form a beginning, and I am strongly impressed with the opinion that in no other way can this University gain life and being.

But if this should be the result, the understanding must be fully carried out, that it is not to be an institution for boys and girls, but for men and women.

An institution, where a person in any profession or position in life, who may desire to increase his store of knowledge, in any particular branch of it, may have the opportunity afforded to him. Such will be found in every rank of social life. The necessity of increase in knowledge is recognized by every right-minded man until the day of his death. It is keenly felt, even by those who look merely to pecuniary advantage.

I have thus imperfectly endeavored to impress on my hearers, and particularly on the citizens of Albany, the necessity of moving in the matter, and of making a beginning, as alone promising a completion.

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#### NON OMNIS MORIAR.

The various institutions and organizations with which Dr. Beck had been prominently connected, on the occasion of his decease expressed their appreciation of his virtues and talents, and the great general loss sustained in his death, in the following proceedings and resolutions:

UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK.—At a meeting of the Regents of the University of the State of New-York, held Nov. 29th, 1855, it was ordered that the following record be entered on their minutes:

“The Regents, in recording the death of their late Secretary, Theodric Romeyn Beck, unanimously

express their high appreciation of the excellences of his character, distinguished by its modesty, simplicity and integrity, of the extent and variety of his acquirements, of his eminent, long-continued and efficient labors for the promotion of education and science, of his faithfulness and diligence in the discharge of the laborious and varied duties of his office, and of the great value of his services in the several departments belonging to it."

*Resolved*, That in testimony of their respect for the deceased, the Board, together with its officers, will attend his funeral on Wednesday next, and that on that day the State Library be closed.

*Resolved*, That the Regents tender to the family of the deceased the assurance of their sincere sympathy with them in their bereavement, and that a copy of this record, attested by the Chancellor, be transmitted to them.

JOHN H. HICKCOX,

*Secretary pro tem.*

MANAGERS OF THE NEW-YORK STATE LUNATIC ASYLUM.—At a meeting of the managers of the State Lunatic Asylum, held at Utica, on the twenty-first day of November, 1855, it was

*Resolved*, That the intelligence of the death of Dr. T. Romeyn Beck, the President of this Board, has been received with deep regret and sorrow; that this Institution, from its commencement, has been greatly indebted to him for his wise counsels, his judicious

and efficient action, his integrity and independence in pursuing the path of duty, his warm sympathy with its officers and the afflicted subjects of its care, and his prompt and hearty devotion to all its interests; and that, in his removal, it has suffered a loss which is painfully felt, and which can hardly be repaired. And that the individual members of this Board, remembering his great private as well as public worth, and having in mind the unbroken kindness and harmony which have prevailed in their association with him, feel his death to be a severe personal affliction.

*Resolved*, As a token of respect to his memory, that his funeral be attended by the superintendent of the asylum, and so many of the managers as shall be able to accompany him to Albany.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family of Dr. Beck.

CHARLES A. MANN, *Chairman.*

E. A. WETMORE, *Secretary.*

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TRUSTEES OF THE ALBANY MEDICAL COLLEGE.—At a special meeting of the Trustees of the Albany Medical College, held Nov. 20, 1855, on the occasion of the death of Dr. Theodric Romeyn Beck,

*Resolved*, That we have learned with deep regret the death of Dr. Theodric Romeyn Beck, who for forty years past has been identified with almost every leading measure, in this State, for the promotion of education, and of medical and general science and

letters, and who for many years was one of the most laborious and distinguished professors in this institution. That, while his varied attainments and his able and learned contributions to medical science, and to almost every department of liberal knowledge, have reflected honor upon himself and upon his country, he has endeared himself to us by his general and estimable qualities as a man, and by the example of a pure life devoted with great energy and singleness of purpose, to objects of lasting interest and usefulness to the whole community.

*Resolved*, That we tender to his family our earnest and respectful sympathy.

*Resolved*, That as a mark of our respect we will attend his funeral in a body.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family of the deceased, and be also published in the several daily papers.

A. J. PARKER, *President pro tem.*

O. MEADS, *Secretary pro tem.*

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE FACULTY OF THE ALBANY MEDICAL COLLEGE, at a meeting held Nov. 20, 1855:

The Faculty have heard with deep regret of the death of their beloved and honored associate, Professor T. Romeyn Beck, and wish to express their sense of his excellent qualities and eminent services.

By his labors in science he was a benefactor of mankind, and an honor to his country; by his

teaching and influence he elevated the character of our profession and extended its usefulness; by the purity and honesty of his life he has commanded the respect, and by his noble and generous temper, won the love of all who knew him. Therefore,

*Resolved*, That to mark our respect we will attend his funeral and wear the usual badge of mourning.

*Resolved*, That we offer to his family our sincere sympathy in their affliction.

*Resolved*, That these proceedings be entered on our minutes, and communicated to the family of the deceased.

HOWARD TOWNSEND, *Secretary*,

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ALUMNI OF THE ALBANY MEDICAL COLLEGE.—At a special meeting of the Albany Medical College, convened on the occasion of the death of the late Dr. T. Romeyn Beck, on Tuesday evening, Dr. W. H. Craig, president of the society, arose and remarked as follows:

Gentlemen of the Society, it becomes my duty to announce to you the decease of Prof. T. Romeyn Beck, and the object of meeting at this time is one of a painful nature.

The Alumni of the Albany Medical College owe, in part, their celebrity and prosperity to the teachings and influences of Prof. T. Romeyn Beck. We have indeed occasion to mourn his loss. Identified as he was with a department of medical instruction

requiring ripe scholarship, profound and accurate analysis, he was pre-eminently qualified to impart knowledge, and lead the pupil through the labyrinth of scientific research. His name will ever be associated with the science of medical jurisprudence.

We have, in the present instance, opened up anew a train of sorrowful recollections. It is but a short time since a vacant chair in the laboratory told of the loss to us of another instructor and guide. It is rare to meet, united by kindred, two nobler or more illustrious in social or professional life than the brothers Beck. In their decease, in the meridian of their usefulness, education has lost noble advocates, and we worthy exemplars. I trust that the recollection of the many virtues of the deceased may be to us, in the pursuit of a noble profession, a guiding and inspiring remembrance. Hoping that the society will adopt some suitable mode of expressing their sorrow for this bereavement, I leave the subject with you.

Dr. U. O. Bigelow, president of the Albany County Medical Society, also paid a feeling tribute to the memory of the deceased.

Prof. Quackenbush, of the Albany Medical College, made a few remarks, after which he presented the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That the alumni and members of the Albany Medical College have received with sincere

sorrow and regret the announcement of the death of their former teacher, Theodric Romeyn Beck.

*Resolved*, That while this announcement occasions deep sorrow, the memory of his great attainments, his extended usefulness, his world-wide reputation, his kind and generous qualities, and his noble virtues, afford consolation in the hour of bereavement.

*Resolved*, That we respectfully tender to the family of the deceased, our heartfelt sympathy in their affliction.

*Resolved*, That we will attend, as a society, the funeral of the deceased.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family.

WM. H. CRAIG, *President.*

LEVI MOORE, *Secretary.*

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MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE COUNTY OF ALBANY.—At a meeting of this society, held in the Common Council chamber, on Tuesday, November 20th, at 12 P. M., the meeting having been called by the president, Dr. Bigelow, in consequence of the death of Dr. T. Romeyn Beck, who has been a member of the society since 1811—Dr. James McNaughton rose and spoke of his long and intimate relations with the deceased, and that upon him now, as the oldest member present, devolved the melancholy privilege of presenting for the consideration of the society the following:

*Whereas*, It hath pleased God to remove by death our associate and much esteemed friend, Theodric Romeyn Beck; and

*Whereas*, It is meet and proper, that when men, who have been eminently useful in their generation, are called from their labors, their decease should be followed by a public expression of a sense of the loss sustained by the community to which they belonged; and

*Whereas*, Our lamented brother was not only distinguished for his social and private virtues, but for great public services, which rendered him a benefactor to the human race; therefore,

*Resolved*, That, as a mark of respect to the memory of our deceased brother, we will attend his funeral in a body, and wear the usual badge of mourning.

*Resolved*, That we deeply sympathize with the family of the deceased in their affliction, and offer our sincere condolence.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these proceedings be transmitted to the family of the deceased.

The resolutions were unanimously adopted, and the society adjourned, to meet at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  o'clock, P. M., Wednesday, at the Common Council chamber, preparatory to attending the funeral.

SYLVESTER D. WILLARD, *Secretary.*

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ALBANY INSTITUTE.—At a meeting held at the Albany Academy, Monday evening, Nov. 19th, 1855, the following was unanimously adopted:

The members of the Albany Institute, assembled on the occasion of the death of Theodric Romeyn Beck, their president, desirous of paying to his memory those tokens of respect which are prompted by their sincere affection for him while living, and their sorrow at his death, and which are due to his large attainments in letters and science; to his labors for many years in the advancement and diffusion of sound learning; to his practical wisdom in the discharge of the many duties which have been imposed upon him; to his kindly temper, to his benevolent heart, to his unstained integrity in all the relations of a long life, do resolve,—

1. That they tender to the family of the deceased their respectful sympathy in the affliction that has fallen upon them.
2. That they will, in a body, attend the funeral of the deceased.
3. That the record of these proceedings be entered upon the minutes of the Institute, and that a copy thereof be delivered to the family.

Members will assemble at the Institute rooms at  
3½ P. M.

JOHN E. GAVIT, *Recording Sec'y.*

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TRUSTEES OF THE ALBANY ACADEMY.—At a meeting of the Trustees of the Albany Academy, held Nov. 20, 1855:

This Board having learned with deep sorrow the decease of their honored friend and associate, Theodric Romeyn Beck, M. D., LL. D., who for more than thirty years was the principal of the Academy, and for the last seven years has been the president of this Board, deem it proper to record their sense of the eminent services rendered by the deceased to this Institution and to the cause of science and education. And especially would they bear witness to the simplicity, frankness, and elevation of his character,—to the respect and affection with which he was ever regarded by his pupils,—to his large and varied literary and scientific acquirements, and to the disinterested zeal and faithfulness with which he labored through the whole course of his life to advance the interests of sound learning.

*Resolved*, That as a manifestation of our esteem and respect for the deceased, we will attend his funeral in a body, and wear the usual badge of mourning; and that the faculty, with the former and present students of the Academy, be requested to join us.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family of the deceased, and be also published in the several city papers.

R. V. DE WITT, *President pro tem.*

W. A. MILLER, *Secretary.*

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ALPHA SIGMA.—At a special meeting of the Alpha Sigma, held Nov. 20th, 1855, the President having

announced the death of Dr. T. Romeyn Beck, on motion the following were appointed a committee to draft resolutions expressive of the feelings of the Society; John E. McElroy, W. H. Haskell, E. B. Miller, E. J. Miller, and J. C. McClure; who reported the following, which were unanimously adopted:

*Whereas*, The Alpha Sigma, composed of the former students of the Albany Academy, have heard with profound sorrow of the death of their much beloved principal, Dr. Theodric Romeyn Beck; and

*Whereas*, The members of this Society individually can testify to his care and devoted exertions as principal of that Institution, and of his good-will and friendship to each and every one in later years; therefore, in testimony of our grief for his loss, be it hereby

*Resolved*, That in the death of Dr. Beck, we recognize the inscrutable providence of an all-wise Jehovah, in the removing from our midst a bright and shining light, distinguished alike for the brilliancy of his genius, and the simplicity and honesty of a refined and generous heart.

*Resolved*, That this Society unite with the other students of the Academy in testifying our veneration for the memory of Dr. Beck, and that we hold his life to be an exemplary criterion for our fellow young men here and elsewhere.

*Resolved*, That this Society attend the funeral of Dr. Beck in a body, and that a copy of these proceed-

ings be transmitted to the family of the deceased, and published in the city papers.

A. McCLURE, JR., *President.*

R. V. DE WITT, JR., *Secretary pro tem.*

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MEETING OF THE OLD PUPILS OF THE ALBANY ACADEMY.—Pursuant to the published notice, a very large attendance of the pupils of the late Dr. Beck was held yesterday at the Academy.

Mr. Miller, Principal of the Academy, called the meeting to order, and nominated J. V. L. Pruyn, Esq., as chairman, and the nomination being confirmed, Mr. Pruyn, on taking the chair, made a few appropriate remarks in reference to Dr. Beck, and concluded with the suggestion that an appropriate testimonial should be erected in memory of the deceased.

On motion, Lewis Benedict, Jr., was nominated as secretary.

Mr. Meads moved that the chair appoint a committee of nine to draw up resolutions expressive of the feelings of the meeting. He prefaced his motion with an eloquent tribute to the character of the deceased, briefly reviewing his life as that of one whose example and whose works rendered his demise a public loss. He, too, cordially seconded the suggestion of the chairman, that a permanent and enduring memorial should be erected.

The chair appointed the following committee on resolutions: Orlando Meads, Andrew Brown, Henry

L. King, Carlton Edwards, Robert H. Pruyn, Gilbert H. Wilson, Rev. Sylvanus Reed, George W. Carpenter, George Ten Broeck.

The following resolutions were thereupon submitted and unanimously adopted:

*Whereas*, The graduates and old pupils of Albany Academy are desirous of expressing in some public manner their affection and esteem for their former teacher, Dr. T. Romeyn Beck; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That in his death they mourn the loss of an instructor who devoted the best years of a long and useful life to the young, and whose unremitting and laborious efforts in their behalf should enshrine his memory in the hearts of all the friends of the noble cause of education.

*Resolved*, That the Albany Academy owes much of its reputation and success to the protracted and systematic regulation of Dr. Beck, who, for a period of over thirty years, was its head and principal, and whose wholesome advice and judicious discipline gave it an honored and respected position among similar institutions throughout the land.

*Resolved*, That his old pupils desire to pay, in the same simple and unpretending spirit which was one of the noted traits in the remarkable character of their former teacher, a tribute to the excellence of his life, his unselfish and self-sacrificing disposition, to the soundness of his judgment, the sagacity of his intellect, and to the generous and genial graces which

made Dr. Beck a universal favorite among his pupils.

*Resolved*, That we mourn in his loss a devoted friend to the young and middle-aged men of Albany, and find in his death another link broken in the chain which unites the past with the present, and a fresh severing of old ties and cherished associations connected with the earlier and happier moments of life.

*Resolved*, That we attend his funeral obsequies in a body, and that the family and more immediate friends of the deceased have our sympathy and condolence in an event which has bereaved them and inflicted a loss upon our own city and the world at large.

*Resolved*, That the chair appoint a committee of ten, who shall be charged with the duty of procuring some suitable memorial of the deceased, to be placed in the academy, or its grounds.

The appointment of the committee under the last resolution, was left with the chair to report, and publish hereafter.

The meeting then adjourned.

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE STATE NORMAL SCHOOL.

—At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the State Normal School, held at the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, on Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 20th, 1855, the following preamble and resolutions were offered by the Superintendent, and ordered to be entered upon the minutes:

The Executive Committee of the New-York Normal School, in recording the decease of their Secretary, T. Romeyn Beck, M. D., take occasion to declare their deep and earnest consciousness that the spirit of a good and useful man has withdrawn from the earth; that from society has been taken one of its brightest ornaments; that this department of science has lost an efficient laborer and zealous teacher, and that the school of which this committee have charge has been deprived of an able and constant friend. In consideration, and as a befitting acknowledgment of this afflictive dispensation, it is therefore hereby

*Resolved*, That, in testimony of veneration and respect for the memory of the deceased, and with a desire to emulate his virtues, this committee will attend his funeral on Wednesday next, and order that on that day the State Normal School shall be closed, and its exercises suspended.

*Resolved*, That we tender to his bereaved family the assurance of our sympathy with them in the loss which they have sustained, in the dissolution of relations, the duties of which were performed by the deceased with the most constant rectitude, affection and fidelity; and that a copy of this record, certified by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, be transmitted to them as an evidence thereof.

CHAS. L. AUSTIN, *Secretary pro tem.*

At a special meeting of Master's Lodge, No. 5, of Free and Accepted Masons, held at Masonic Hall, on the evening of Wednesday, Nov. 20th, the Worshipful Master having announced the decease of Brother Theodric Romeyn Beck, on motion, a committee of three were appointed to draft resolutions suitable to the occasion, who reported the following:

*Resolved*, That Master's Lodge has received with great regret the intelligence of the decease of one of its earliest and most eminent members.

*Resolved*, That while the members most sincerely sympathise with the family and friends, in their sad bereavement, they are consoled by the reflection, that the life of their cherished brother has been spent in the exercise of all that is great and noble, and that his whole career has been distinguished by an earnest endeavor to render himself useful to his fellow-men.

*Resolved*, That, as a tribute of respect to his memory, this Lodge will attend his funeral in a body, and wear the usual badge of mourning.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be communicated to the family of the deceased, and also published.

JOHN JACOB WENDELL,  
STEPHEN CLARK,  
CHAS. D. RATHBONE,

*Committee.*

CORNELIUS GLEN, *Secretary.*

## FUNERAL OF DR. BECK.

The funeral of Dr. Beck was very largely attended on Wednesday afternoon, November 21st, from the house of his son-in-law, Hon. William Parmelee. Rev. Dr. Campbell conducted the services, and paid an eloquent and appropriate tribute to the distinguished character and virtues of the deceased.

The funeral *cortege* moved from the house at half-past four, in the following order:

Clergy of the City.

Bearers.

Mourners.

Regents of the University.

Officers of the State Lunatic Asylum.

Officers and Members of the Medical Society.

Free and Accepted Masons.

Trustees and Faculty of the Albany Medical College.

Trustees and Faculty of the Albany Academy.

Former Students and Graduates of the  
Albany Academy.

Present Pupils of the Albany Academy.

Citizens.

Officers of the Police Department.

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NEW-YORK STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY, FEBRUARY 7,  
1856.—Dr. Fisher, of Sing Sing, presented the following, which was unanimously adopted:

*Whereas*, Prof. Theodric Romeyn Beck, of the city of Albany,—who for thirty-nine years has been a permanent member of this Society, and for several terms the distinguished president of the same, whose “Transactions” from its origin to the present time have been enriched by his erudite communications, its members encouraged by his noble example,—has since our last meeting, after a long illness, been removed by death; therefore,

*Resolved*, That in the death of Dr. T. R. Beck, the State Medical Society has lost one of its most valuable members, the Faculty of the Albany College one of their main pillars of strength, the medical profession of the State of New-York, of the United States, and of the world at large, one of the most devoted, indefatigable, and earnest promoters of medical science.

*Resolved*, That the deaf, the dumb, the insane, have lost their most faithful friend; the cause of education, and the public generally, one of its greatest benefactors.

*Resolved*, That we feel deeply this dispensation of Divine Providence, and sympathise profoundly with his family and friends in this their greatest affliction.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the family of the deceased.

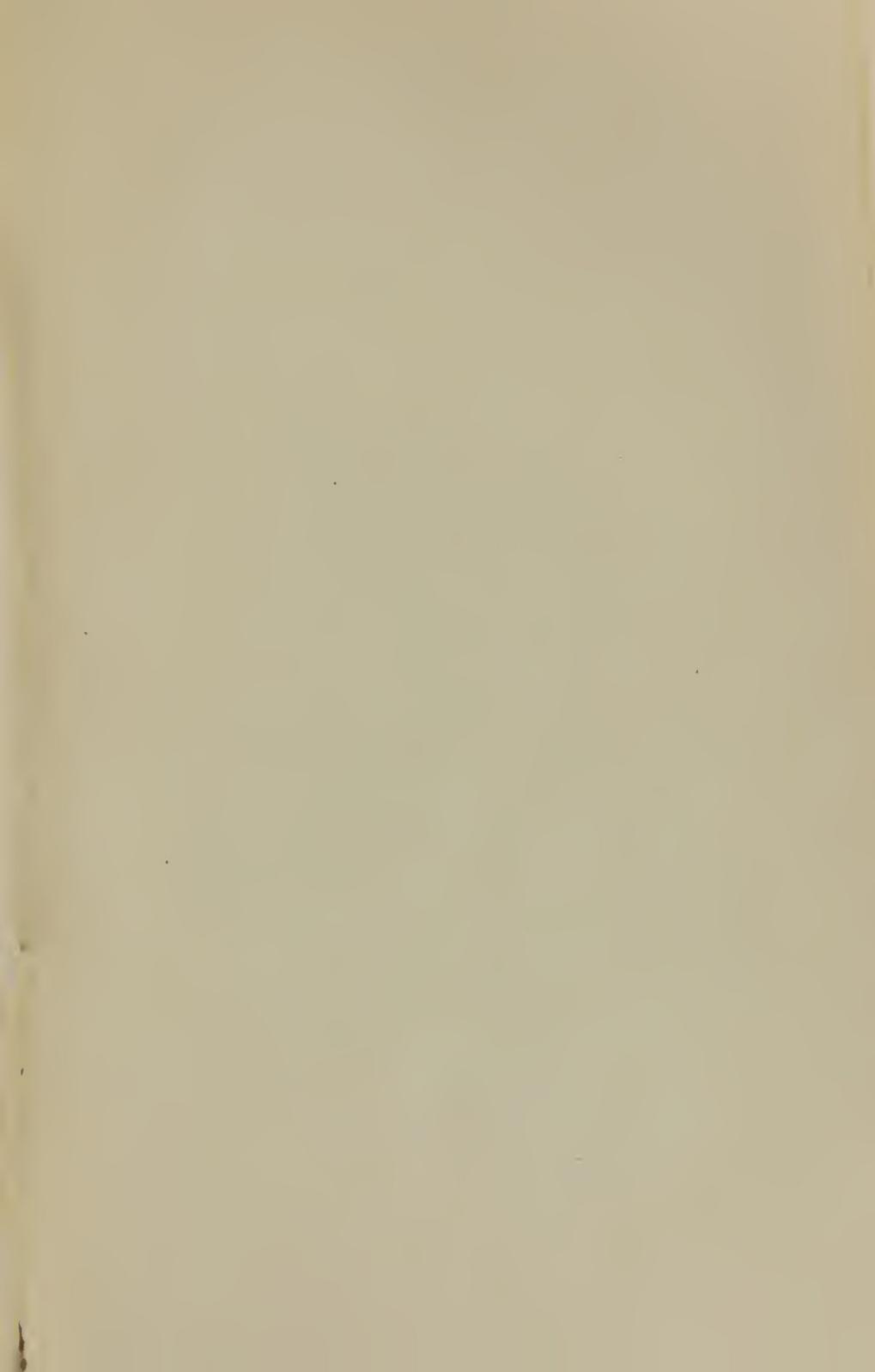
The Society adjourned to meet at 7 o'clock, to hear Dr. Hamilton's address.

The Society met at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  o'clock, and proceeded to the Capitol, where the President of the Society, Dr. Frank H. Hamilton, delivered the annual address, the subject of which was, "Life and Character of Theodric Romeyn Beck, M. D., LL.D."

Dr. Goodrich presented the following, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Society are eminently due, and are hereby tendered, to the President, Dr. Hamilton, for his interesting and truthful delineation of the life and character of the late Dr. Beck, and that he be requested to furnish a copy to the committee of publication for the Transactions of the Society.

The address occupied over an hour, and was listened to with great interest by a large audience.





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